



Robin  
by Sandy Hokanson

## Calendar of events:

### Monthly Bird Walks at Quarry Hill

**April 1, May 6, & June 3.** Meet at 9 am at the Quarry Hill Nature Center and join us on a casual walk thru the park. Walks usually last about one hour. Free and open to the public - no registration required. Leaders: Terry & Joyce Grier

### April 9 - Whitewater Valley Field trip

Sunday, April 9, 2017 / 7:00 am start / Leader: Joel Dunnette

Meet in the east parking lot of the Heintz Center to car pool. Bring your own lunch. We'll visit the Whitewater State Park Nature Center and look for early spring migrants throughout the management area, especially waterfowl in the many pools. We'll return by mid-afternoon.

### April 13 - Woodcock Watch Field Trip

Thursday, April 13, 2017 / 7:30 pm at Chester Woods / Leader: Jim Peterson

Every spring Woodcock perform one of the strangest and most interesting mating rituals. We will observe it up close, beginning at dusk. Meet near the entrance at Chester Woods County Park at 7:30 PM or in the horse corral parking lot. Note: a County Parks sticker is required to enter the park.

### April 22 - Reservoir Field Trip

Saturday, April 22, 2017 from 8 am - 11 am / Leader: Lance Vrieze

Meet in the east parking lot at the Heintz Center to car pool. The flood control reservoirs around Rochester have created some of the best bird habitat in Olmsted County and are more often than not where local rarities are found. We will visit several to see what we can turn up during migration. There will only be a few short walks totaling less than a mile. Bring a scope and binoculars if you have them, otherwise some will be available to share.

### April 23 - Earthfest at the Mayo Civic Center

Visit the ZVAS booth. Find more details at [earthfestrochestermn.org](http://earthfestrochestermn.org) or [www.facebook.com/rochester2017/](http://www.facebook.com/rochester2017/)

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### White-crowned Sparrows

Each spring I look forward to seeing a few White-crowned Sparrows under my feeder and in the brushier parts of my yard. Their distinctive black-and-white head, pale beak, and crisp gray breast make them one of the easiest sparrows to identify.

White-crowned Sparrows will eat sunflower and other kinds of seeds - though they prefer to stay on the ground eating seeds dropped by other birds.

In southeast Minnesota we generally only see these birds during spring and fall migration - so keep a close watch for these sparrows in your garden this spring.

Sandy Hokanson

Immature White-crowned Sparrows sport rust and gray colored stripes on their head instead of the bold black and white of the adult bird above.



### Calendar of events continued...

#### **April 25 - ZVAS Monthly Program at Quarry Hill - Mysteries of the Common Loon**

Tuesday, April 25, 2017 from 7 - 8 pm / Presented by Kevin Kenow

Wildlife Research Biologist Kevin Kenow knows a lot about loon behavior but there are still many mysteries to solve. Kevin will talk to us about the life of the common loon as captured by USGS research scientists using modern technologies such as satellite telemetry and archival geolocator tags. The information they gather helps identify migration staging areas and wintering areas, and much more.



Photo by Stev Maanum

#### **April 29 - Root River County Park Field Trip**

Saturday, April 29, 2017 / 7:30 am - 11am / Leader: Sandy Hokanson

We will visit Root River County Park just south of Rochester near Simpson. Meet in the east parking lot at the Heintz Center at 7:30 AM to car pool.

#### **May 2 & 4 - Lunch with the birds at Kutzky Park**

Noon - 1:15 / Leader: Lance Vrieze

Bring your lunch and join us for a casual walk at the peak of migration. Arrive and leave as needed. We'll start at the picnic shelter at noon.

#### **May 7 - Hok-si-la Park Field Trip**

Sunday, May 7, 2017 / Leaders: Terry & Joyce Grier

Meet at 8 am in the Heintz Center east parking lot to car pool to Lake City. Located on the Mississippi River, Hok-Si-La is a magnet for migrating birds. Bring a snack or a bag lunch. We will return mid-afternoon.

#### **May 23 - ZVAS Monthly Program at Quarry Hill - Birds in Love**

Tuesday, May 23, 2017 from 7 - 8 pm / Presented by Steve Weston

It's spring and love is in the air. Steve will explain the fascinating courtship and mating activities of our avian friends.

#### **June 18 - Damsels & Dragons at Chester Woods**

Sunday, June 18, 2017 from 3 - 5 pm / Leader: Joel Dunnette

Join us at the kiosk near the boat landing to catch some of dragonflies and damselflies to examine up close. Families with children are welcome at this fun activity.

Be sure to visit [ZumbroValleyAudubon.org](http://ZumbroValleyAudubon.org) to confirm events and check for changes or new listings.



Bumblebee on large flowered beardstongue

### **Make this year's garden bird and bee friendly**

Encouraging butterflies, bees and other insects to visit your yard is easy!

- 1. Let your lawn go a little** – let some clover and dandelions grow for the bees and butterflies.
- 2. Go native** – our birds and insects much prefer native plants. Modern hybrids may look good but often contain less pollen and nectar.
- 3. No pesticides** – your intent may be to just kill some ants – but the chemicals kill everything – including all the “good bugs”.
- 4. Plant some milkweed** – Monarch populations have declined 90% in just a few years. Milkweed comes in several beautiful varieties and is easy to grow.
- 5. Add water** – a birdbath is a great start. Add some shallow dishes filled with wet sand or small pebbles and water and the bees and butterflies will thank you.

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